

2018–2021 Department of Education Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy

2021-22: WELLBEING AND ME

OUR GOAL

Children and students are safe, feel supported and are able to flourish, so they can engage in learning

WHAT GUIDES US

2018–2021 Department of Education Strategic Plan

Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

WHAT WE AIM TO ACHIEVE

Children and students feel loved and safe; have access to material basics; have their physical, mental and emotional needs met; are learning and participating; and have a positive sense of culture and identity



Being loved and safe



Having material basics



Being healthy



Learning



Participating



Having a positive sense of culture and identity



OUR FOCUS AREAS

2018 | IMPLEMENTATION DESIGN

2019 | MENTAL WELLBEING

2020-21 | PHYSICAL WELLBEING AND THE ENVIRONMENT

2021-22 | WELLBEING AND ME

SYSTEM PRIORITIES

A common understanding of the impact of wellbeing on learning, and a shared purpose for improving wellbeing

ACTIONS

● Action 1

Continue to ensure processes to measure child and student wellbeing are inclusive, and that surveys undertaken accommodate and allow for adjustment

▲ Action 2

Create learning environments where students feel that they belong, feel connected and are valued through the promotion and delivery of professional learning and resources

▲ Action 3

Promote approaches to the inclusion of student voice in decision making and communicate resources to support this

● Action 4

Embed the Model for Supporting Students Impacted by Trauma

▲ Action 5

Promote the importance of belonging and positive relationships in the Early Years

● Action 6

Provide schools with resources and professional learning that contribute to whole school approaches and targeted responses to address wellbeing for all learners

▲ Action 7

Support learners to have access to essential materials and address barriers to fully participate in learning

KEY

● Ongoing Wellbeing Action (2018–21)

▲ Wellbeing and Me (2021-22)

2021-22 Wellbeing and Me

A positive sense of wellbeing enables children to actively engage in learning with optimism and confidence. The way a child sees themselves and their wellbeing influences their attitudes to learning and their ability to withstand life's challenges.

The 2021-22 spotlight on *Wellbeing and Me* is a culmination of the 2018-2021 Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy's system priority to achieve improved wellbeing in the voice of the learner linked to improved learning outcomes. *Wellbeing and Me* will highlight the importance of the wellbeing domains of participating and having a positive sense of culture and identity. This work is underpinned by the learning domain in recognition of the reciprocal relationship between wellbeing, engagement and learning.¹

The *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey* – now in its third year of collection – is the key dataset of student wellbeing for learning to inform future effort and planning. The *Wellbeing and Me* focus will explore opportunities to further promote student belonging, and positive school and peer relationships to improve student wellbeing.



¹ 'Student Wellbeing, Engagement and Learning across the Middle Years', Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Department of Education, Skills and Employment (Web Page, 2 June 2021) <<https://www.dese.gov.au/quality-schools-package/resources/student-wellbeing-engagement-and-learning-across-middle-years>>

NB. All data noted in this document is taken from the Department of Education, Student Wellbeing Survey data, 2020. Cognitive engagement, emotional engagement with teachers, school climate and school belonging are key performance indicators as part of the Department of Education Measuring System Progress.

What we heard from our students

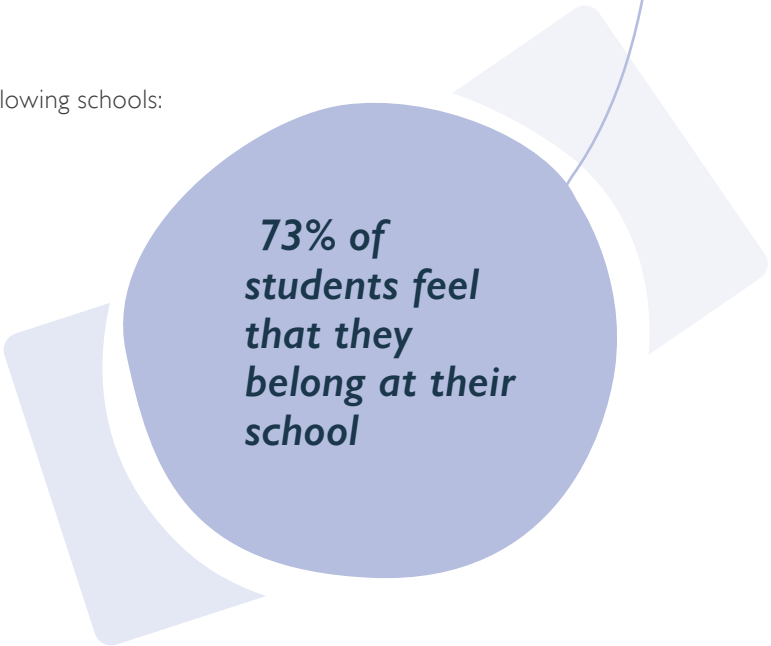
The Child and Student Wellbeing Unit conducted Student Voice Focus Groups over Term 4 2020 and Term 1 2021 to gather the views of students in response to the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey data. Students from primary and secondary schools from around the state shared their views on the key issues that affect their wellbeing and how they wanted schools to respond to the wellbeing data.

Students

- noted that being accepted and “fitting in” were crucial to a sense of belonging
- commented on how creating an environment where student opinions were valued and considered in decision making was critical to supporting their sense of acceptance
- recognised that feeling safe and having friends were important to establishing a sense of belonging at school
- recognised that lacking a sense of belonging to school and peers could result in poor academic performance and low attendance
- said teachers could support belonging by treating all students equally, having a sense of humour and showing an interest in their students
- suggested that a school could enhance student belonging through activity days and recommended that these days should value a variety of student interests not just sports carnivals
- in a college noted the positive impact of increased agency and trust in years 11 and 12 to their sense of belonging
- recommended highlighting key issues from the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey and digging deeper into those themes by engaging with students further on the issue
- One primary school student suggested, “If Student Wellbeing Survey data showed lots of students didn’t belong – do another survey about belonging – ask students what makes them feel they do/don’t belong.”
- Another high school student noted that, “having involvement in decision making is critical to belonging, we get a sense of ownership and are more likely to be involved and come to school.”

Thank you to the students of the following schools:

- Burnie High School
- Rosebery District School
- East Tamar Primary School
- Riverside High School
- Franklin Primary School
- Clarence High School
- Hellyer College
- Hobart College
- Woodbridge District School



**73% of
students feel
that they
belong at their
school**

Taking action



● Action 1

Continue to ensure processes to measure child and student wellbeing are inclusive, and that surveys undertaken accommodate and allow for adjustment

How we will do this

- Develop Auslan capability for the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey to support greater student inclusion and participation
- Encourage the participation of students in offsite flexible learning provisions through targeted communication with schools and Tier 4 Program Leaders
- Explore ways to enhance participation of a diverse range of students, including those who are at most risk of disengagement, particularly those with low attendance
- Explore ways of understanding student wellbeing in a range of alternative education settings and provisions



▲ Action 2

Create learning environments where students feel that they belong, feel connected and are valued through the promotion and delivery of professional learning and resources

How we will do this

- Deliver professional learning on ways to understand, recognise and acknowledge our First Nations learners such as Tasmanian Aboriginal Communities Today, The Orb and Truth-Telling in your Teaching
- Support schools through professional learning and school-based strategies, to increase active participation and engagement of students and their families with an EAL background, encourage student voices, raise awareness of the impact of cultural diversity, celebrate key events on the religious calendars and connect students to opportunities within their local community
- Encourage students to make connections between their own worlds and the worlds of others by embedding the Intercultural Understanding general capability into teaching and learning
- Provide professional learning to support schools to use their wellbeing data and involve students in decision making

81% of students feel part of a group of friends and usually fit in with other students

Taking action



▲ Action 3

Promote approaches to the inclusion of student voice in decision making and communicate resources to support this

How we will do this

- Develop and communicate resources to support schools to activate student voice in embedding the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey data in school planning
- Provide a clear and consistent approach to capturing student voice to improve practice for schools and business units, through the release of a student voice guide
- Collaborate with schools to use the Student Wellbeing and Engagement data to understand effective student wellbeing and engagement strategies

**87% of students
felt they had
good quality
social supports
from peers**

**65% of senior
students reported
being resilient in
times of stress**

Taking action



● Action 4

Embed the [Model for Supporting Students Impacted by Trauma](#)

How we will do this

- Continue to improve the annual referral process for allocating funding to support students impacted by trauma
- Refine the process to identify schools for targeted support and the delivery of consistent system wide programs to build staff capacity in trauma informed practices
- Continue to provide opportunities for all schools to participate in quality professional learning, including programs that support a positive sense of culture and belonging for students

76% of students care about each other and treat each other with respect



▲ Action 5

Promote the importance of belonging and positive relationships in the Early Years

How we will do this

- Continue to implement professional learning on the use of evidence-based screening tools that elicit and address parental concerns regarding a child's development, health and wellbeing in Working Together
- Map the practices and screening tools used to identify learner developmental needs, support wellbeing and build positive relationships to engage families in learning
- Build the knowledge of teachers to identify signals that a student is not tracking well and share resources to support student need
- Develop and release a package of support to build understanding of development in birth to five as a foundation to meeting the Kindergarten Development Check

Taking action



● Action 6

Provide schools with resources and professional learning that contribute to whole school approaches and targeted responses to address wellbeing for all learners

How we will do this

- Consolidate and promote existing child and student wellbeing resources via the Child and Student Wellbeing Canvas page
- Identify and promote professional learning opportunities in wellbeing, including mental health
- Promote the use of the wellbeing check-in to understand in real time individual student wellbeing

82% of students reported that they persist with classroom tasks to support their learning

96% of students reported they had good relationships and support from their teachers



▲ Action 7

Support learners to have access to essential materials and address barriers to fully participate in learning

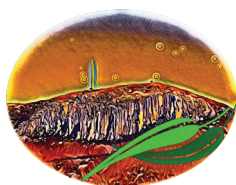
How we will do this

- Support students experiencing financial disadvantage to have access to sanitary items and to be involved in decision making about the provision of these items
- Support the Tasmanian School Canteen Association to work with schools to build on practices that promote and support a whole school approach to eating well in line with the Australian Curriculum
- Provide school and system expectations for equitable student access to technology to drive student engagement and digital literacy

Snapshots

We know that for a lot of Aboriginal children and young people, being acknowledged and having their identity respected is key to supporting their learning. Creating a learning environment that supports students to have a positive sense of identity, and demonstrating a respect for culture and identity within schools, is the main thing that will keep Aboriginal learners in schools – and engaged in their learning. It is important that our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students see their culture and identity as having a place in the school or classroom. Learning about their identity in the classroom supports this. Aboriginal Education Services offers professional learning for staff to recognise and acknowledge First Nation learners. This starts by understanding their culture, learning needs and looking for opportunities to include Tasmanian Aboriginal histories and cultures in your teaching, as well as building relationships with Aboriginal families in your school community.

(Aboriginal Education Services, Department of Education)



The Mob - Hobart College

The Hobart College journey started with Principal Tracy Siedler seeking guidance from Aboriginal Education Services to inform an Acknowledgement of Country. This grew to identifying the need for an Aboriginal Education Worker (AEW) as a starting point in 2020 – someone for Aboriginal students to authentically connect with, and to lead by example within the College. What followed extended organically across the College. Over her 2 days at College, the AEW gathered in a group of students who had the opportunity to explore their own identity and discuss wellbeing and personal belonging. The students made community connections outside of their immediate community area, in particular with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at Rosny College. This enabled these students to establish relationships and find belonging in each other at this stage in their life, which will follow them throughout their life.

Towards the end of 2020, the College decided to create a dedicated “opt in” Home Group for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identified students – The Mob – in 2021. Rather than meeting informally in the AEW office, The Mob provides students with an opportunity to come together each week in a dedicated space to embrace their cultural identities, and to meet other young mob. The Mob meet every Wednesday but often the students come in during other times for a yarn with the AEW or to get help with school work, university applications etc. Through The Mob, students have really started to connect with each other. It has attracted a diverse group of learners with different interests and backgrounds. Friendship groups who would never have crossed paths have come together to build relationships. Through this general commitment to understanding, The Mob now see themselves reflected across the College.

More broadly, whole staff professional learning has taken place to encourage a shift in understanding and embracing of Tasmanian Aboriginal culture across the College. An Acknowledgement of Country is now displayed in the foyer, which was developed through lengthy consultation with staff and students. For the students who had input, for their ideas to be taken on board and to see their voice reflected and respected in the final piece, was the biggest demonstration of their value and belonging within the College. The AEW is working across the College to build understanding for the significance of a Welcome/Acknowledgment of Country and to normalise this as part of everyday practice at every meeting and event.

Snapshots

The Mob will continue to be a dedicated Home Group class going forwards. This allows for stronger connections to be built and time for on Country activities. This work has been made possible by the AEW, who has become embedded in work across the College, working with staff on both the development and running of professional development, and assisting with the integration of Tasmanian Aboriginal Education into many different classrooms. The growth in awareness and engagement across the College has been made possible due to a genuine recognition of its importance and support from leadership.

Student Voice - Exeter High School

Students from a Year 8 Humanities and Social Sciences class at Exeter High School explored the different ways in which people can participate in Australia's democracy. The teacher facilitated a class discussion about the issues the students felt were important to them and where they saw opportunities for change in our society.

During this discussion, the class spoke about how many students struggle to afford sanitary products and sometimes even miss school due to this. They raised that many girls wouldn't feel comfortable talking about this openly and that the issue could go under the radar. The students also considered approaches by other states, who provide sanitary items in schools and felt this could be a solution to this problem.

From this discussion, they wrote to their local representatives asking for them to take action.

The students wanted to highlight that a lack of access to sanitary products can affect wellbeing and also be a barrier to learning.

Their voices were heard, with the Tasmanian Government announcing that sanitary products would be available in all Government schools from Term 3, 2021.

Since the students' advocacy sparked this change, the importance of continuing to listen to our student voice to inform decision-making was clear. The Child and Student Wellbeing Unit asked the Exeter High School students to help guide the Department's approach to providing sanitary products to students.

The students met with the Child and Student Wellbeing Unit and outlined why it was such an important issue, how many of their peers would be positively affected by this initiative, and how incredible it felt to influence change at a state-wide level. The students also provided advice on ways that the Department can support other schools to incorporate their students' voice in decision-making.



Exeter High Students
Layla and Eliza



Being loved and safe

Learners have positive relationships and connections with others, feel safe in their learning environments, and are resilient to withstand life's challenges.



Having material basics

Learners have materials to access and fully participate in education, and the resources to function well and actively engage.



Being healthy

Learners have their physical, developmental, psychosocial and mental health needs met, with resources provided to support their growth.



Learning

Learners are supported to be curious, creative and empowered life-long learners.



Participating

Learners are able to have a voice with their views taken into account and are involved in decision-making that affects them and their learning.



Having a positive sense of culture and identity

Learners have a positive sense of identity and belonging, and are optimistic about their future and success in learning.

Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy

2021-22: WELLBEING AND ME



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